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**Constitution and By-Laws of the  
New York State Association of Fire Chaplains, Inc.  
(As approved April 27, 2014)  
(Updated – May 1, 2017)**



11 **ARTICLE I**

12 **ASSOCIATION NAME**

13

14 Section 1 – The name of this Association is the “New York State Association of Fire  
15 Chaplains, (NYS AFC) Inc.”, and is incorporated under the laws of the State of New  
16 York.

17 **ARTICLE II**

18 **MISSION STATEMENT**

19

20 Section 1 – The mission of this Association is to unite all Chaplains of the State of New  
21 York in order to promote a deeper and wider knowledge of one another in the true  
22 ecumenical and interfaith spirit; and to establish statewide procedures of  
23 standardization in serving our fellow firefighters, Emergency Medical Services (EMS),  
24 and God, our supreme Chief.

25 **ARTICLE III**

26 **MEMBERSHIP AND REGIONS**

27

28 Section I – Only Chaplains, duly elected or appointed by Fire Departments, Fire  
29 Companies, Firematic Associations or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies  
30 within the State of New York, including clergy and laity, are to be admitted as a Full  
31 Member.

32

33 Section II – Honorary Membership may be awarded only on the recommendation of the  
34 Executive Board of this Association and by a majority vote of the membership at the  
35 Annual Meeting.

36

37 Section III - All members of this Association, active in the Firematic or Emergency  
38 Medical Services Associations where they are authorized to serve as a Chaplain, will  
39 also hold the position of delegate to the New York State Association of Fire Chaplains,  
40 Inc. The Chaplain is to ensure a copy of this authorization letter is on file in the  
41 department’s records.

42

43 Section IV – Anyone interested in becoming a member of this Association must submit  
44 with the approved membership application, a letter signed by the appointing officer of  
45 the organization that they represent. The NYSAFC, Inc., has the right to accept or  
46 reject any application for membership.

47  
48 Section V – Once a person becomes a Full Member of the NYSAFC, Inc. they may  
49 continue their Association membership even though their status as a Chaplain may  
50 change. If their status as a Chaplain changes, they will have the right to continue as a  
51 Member, but would be ineligible to hold any elected or appointed office on the Executive  
52 Board.

53  
54 Section VI – Any member in good standing for a period of ten (10) consecutive years  
55 will receive a Ten Year Recognition Award.

56  
57 Section VII – Active Chaplains living outside the State of New York, who have never  
58 held membership in the NYSAFC, Inc. may upon submission of an application and  
59 payment of dues be enrolled as an ASSOCIATE Member. They may attend all  
60 meetings and trainings of the Association, but would be ineligible to (1) vote (2) hold any  
61 elected or appointed office on the Executive Board.

62  
63 Section VIII – There are eight (8) regions covering all of New York State. These regions  
64 with their respective counties are:

65 **A. West Region**

66 Niagara, Orleans, Erie, Genesee, Wyoming, Chautauqua,  
67 Cattaraugus, Allegany

68 **B. West Central Region**

69 Monroe, Wayne, Livingston, Ontario, Yates, Seneca, Schuyler,  
70 Steuben, Chemung

71 **C. North Region**

72 Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, Essex

73 **D. North Central Region**

74 Oswego, Oneida, Herkimer, Hamilton, Fulton, Montgomery, Warren

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**E. Central Region**

Cayuga, Onondaga, Madison, Tompkins, Cortland, Chenango, Otsego, Tioga, Broome

**F. East Region**

Delaware, Schoharie, Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Saratoga, Washington

**G. South East Region**

Greene, Columbia, Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Westchester, Rockland

**H. South Region**

Bronx, New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Nassau, Suffolk

Section IX – Members are assigned to one of the eight regions by virtue of the county of their Chaplaincy;

Section X – There are four categories for membership in the NYSAFC, Inc.:

1. Full Member – Met the eligibility criteria on the official NYSAFC, Inc., application. A Full Member can participate in all training, hold any office and will have voice and vote at the Annual Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. To be a Full Member in good standing, the member must have their current year’s dues in the Association paid in full.
2. Member – A Full Member who has given up their role as Chaplain but wishes to remain as a member of the Association. The Member can participate in all training and will have a voice and vote at the Annual Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. The Member is ineligible to serve in any capacity on the Executive Board. To be a Member in good standing, the Full Member must notify the Executive Secretary of their status change and must have their current year’s dues paid in full.
3. Associate Member – Met the eligibility criteria on the official NYSAFC, Inc. Application, but lives outside of the State of New York. The Associate Member can attend trainings but will not have voice/vote at the Annual

107 Meeting or any Special Meeting of this Association. To be an Associate  
108 Member in good standing, the member must be currently appointed as a  
109 Chaplain and have their current year's dues in the Association paid in full.

110 4. Honorary – an individual recognized for their contributions to this Association.  
111 There will be no dues, nor will they have a voice/vote at the Annual Meeting  
112 or any Special Meeting of the association. The Honorary Member is ineligible  
113 to hold any elected or appointed office of this Association. The Executive  
114 Board will recommend to the annual meeting for approval those people  
115 deserving of Honorary Membership.

116

## 117 **ARTICLE IV**

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### 119 **COMMITTEES**

120

121 Section I – Committees are to be formed to promote the interests and mission of the  
122 Association.

123

124 Section II – There shall be the following standing committees and their purpose as  
125 defined:

126

127 **A. Memorial Committee** – to study and standardize all memorial  
128 ceremonies; and to plan the Annual Memorial Service.

129

130 **B. Training Committee** – to develop and provide all aspects of training for  
131 Chaplains, including Fire and EMS training, as deemed appropriate.

132

133 **C. Program Committee** – to propose, develop, and implement interesting  
134 and purposeful programs for all meetings or conventions, and to promote  
135 mutual understanding in ecumenicity and interfaith; at the Annual Meeting  
136 in consultation with the training committee.

137

138 **D. Publicity Committee** – to make known by whatever media will best serve  
139 the existence, mission and achievements of this Association.

140

141 E. **Finance Committee** – to study ways and means to provide funds to carry  
142 on the work of the Association; and prepare annually a guideline budget;

143  
144 F. **Membership Committee** – to recruit and retain chaplains. The second  
145 Deputy Chief Chaplain shall be the chairperson of this committee.

146  
147 G. **Nominating Committee** – composed of all active Past Chief Chaplains,  
148 with the chairperson being the most recent Past Chief Chaplain.

149 r  
150 H. **Good & Welfare** – The Executive Secretary and one other individual  
151 chosen by the current Chief Chaplain.

152  
153 I. **Supply Committee** – to maintain an inventory of supplies and to prepare  
154 items of need and interest, in consultation with the Executive Board.

155  
156 J. **Constitution and By-Law Committee** – to accept and review any  
157 Constitution and By-Law changes proposed by the membership, and to  
158 review the Constitution and By-Laws every (5) five years.

159  
160 Section III – The chairperson of the standing committees shall be appointed by the Chief  
161 Chaplain of the Association.

162  
163 Section IV – Each committee shall consist of a chairperson and at least one other  
164 member chosen by the chairperson of that committee.

165  
166 Section V – The Chief Chaplain may appoint any other committees as deemed  
167 necessary.

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173 **ARTICLE V**

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175 **OFFICERS**

176

177 Section I – The following officers are to be elected: Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chief  
178 Chaplain, Second Deputy Chief Chaplain, and nine (9) Directors. These officers shall  
179 constitute the Board of Trustees of the Corporation.

180

181 Section II – Of the nine (9) directors, one (1) will be at-large and eight (8) will be elected  
182 as Regional Directors to represent their home region. All directors will be elected by the  
183 General Membership with three directors being elected every two years.

184

185 Section III – All directors shall serve without compensation.

186

187 **ARTICLE VI**

188

189 **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

190

191 Section I – The Chief Chaplain, or their designee, shall preside at all meetings. The  
192 Chief Chaplain shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating  
193 Committee.

194

195 Section II – In the absence of the Chief Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief Chaplain will  
196 assume the responsibilities of the Chief Chaplain’s office. If both are absent, the  
197 Second Deputy Chief Chaplain will assume those duties.

198

199 Section III – The Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Executive Board  
200 immediately following each yearly election of officers. The Executive Secretary will  
201 maintain the central office (wherever it might be located) of the Association and will act  
202 under the immediate direction of the Executive Board. The Executive Secretary would  
203 be expected to recommend plans of work for the Association and would conduct the day  
204 to day operations of the organization. The Executive Secretary will be responsible for  
205 the work that would otherwise be exercised by the Chief Chaplain, but this arrangement  
206 would not change the duties of the Chief Chaplain as Presiding Officer and  
207 spokesperson for the organization.

208

209 Section IV (a) – The nine elected directors shall assist the Chief Chaplain in fulfilling  
210 their responsibilities of office, particularly by keeping the Chief Chaplain informed of all  
211 important conditions, facts, needs and problems pertaining to firefighters and  
212 emergency medical workers in New York State.

213  
214 Section IV (b) - The eight (8) regional directors shall be responsible for:

- 215 a. Holding regional meetings of the association
- 216 b. In consultation with the Training Committee, arrange training programs  
217 for their respective regions.
- 218 c. Organize a regional committee for carrying out meetings and training  
219 with one member from each county, if possible.

220  
221 Section V – The Treasurer will be appointed by the Executive Board immediately  
222 following each yearly election of officers. The Treasurer shall have charge of all  
223 moneys of the Association, collected by the Executive Secretary or otherwise, and shall  
224 give a receipt to the Executive Secretary for same when required.

225  
226 Section V (a) – The Treasurer shall keep a correct account of all receipts and  
227 disbursements and submit these accounts to the Executive Board when requested to do  
228 so.

229  
230 Section V (b) – The Treasurer shall pay bills as approved by the Executive Board.

231  
232 Section V (c) - The Treasurer shall report the state of finances of the Association at  
233 each regular meeting of the Executive Board and submit a written annual report, as of  
234 the end of the Fiscal year, at the annual general meeting.

235  
236 Section V (d) – The Treasurer shall cause to have prepared by an outside independent  
237 individual, a financial review of the Association’s funds. Such financial statement shall  
238 be presented to the Executive Board at the annual general meeting.

239  
240 Section V (e) – The Fiscal year shall be...May 1 – April 30

241



242 Section VI – The Supply Officer will be appointed by the Executive Board immediately  
243 following the each yearly election of officers. The Supply Officer shall serve as the  
244 Chairperson of the Supply Committee with voice, but without vote at all meetings of the  
245 Association.

246

247 Section VI (a) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall obligate funds for  
248 prototypes of items need and/or interest, as directed by the Board of Directors.

249

250 Section VI (b) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall place orders with vendors  
251 subject to available funds and/or at the direction of the Board of Directors to bring the  
252 inventory to an adequate level.

253

254 Section VI (c) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall assure that orders for  
255 supplies are processed in a timely manner.

256

257 Section VI (d) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall store and monitor inventory

258

259 Section VI (e) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall assure that supplies are  
260 transported to the annual meeting of the association and any other event, as authorized  
261 by the Board of Directors.

262

263 Section VI (f) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall make deposits of supplies  
264 purchased in a timely manner and forward the notification of the deposit to the  
265 treasurer.

266

267 Section VI (g) - The Supply Officer and their committee shall provide a report of  
268 inventory, supplies ordered, and orders processed at each meeting of the Board of  
269 Directors.

270

271 Section VII – In the event of a conflict of interest, a director must recuse themselves  
272 from voting.

273

## 274 **ARTICLE VII**

275

### 276 **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS**

277

278 Section I – The Nominating Committee shall be composed of all active Past Chief  
279 Chaplains. The Chairperson shall be the most recent Past Chief Chaplain.

280

281 Section II – The Nominating Committee shall submit a roster of candidates to the Chief  
282 Chaplain prior to the scheduled Executive Board’s winter meeting. All nominees to the  
283 Executive Board shall be Full Members in good standing. Each member of the  
284 Association is to receive a copy of the roster, at least one month prior to the general  
285 election.

286

287 Section III – Nominations shall remain open up to the actual election for each office to  
288 allow for further nominations.

289

290 Section IV – All elections shall be by written ballot, unless there is no opposition, then a  
291 voice vote may be taken. The election will be determined by the majority of those  
292 present who are currently qualified members in good standing.

293

294 Section V – The Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a term of two years and shall not  
295 serve more than one term. The First Deputy Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a one  
296 year term and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. If the First Deputy Chief  
297 Chaplain is elected for a second consecutive term, they shall automatically move into  
298 the Chief Chaplain’s position at the end of their second term, without being elected. The  
299 Second Deputy Chief Chaplain is to be elected for a term of one year and shall not  
300 serve more than two consecutive terms. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Chief  
301 Chaplain, the First Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes the office of the Chief  
302 Chaplain and the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain assumes the office of the First Deputy  
303 Chief Chaplain. The office of the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain will remain vacant until  
304 the next Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. Should a vacancy occur in the office of  
305 First Deputy Chief Chaplain, the Second Deputy Chief Chaplain immediately assumes

306 the office of the First Deputy Chief Chaplain, with the office of Second Deputy remaining  
307 open until the next Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting. If a vacancy occurs in all of  
308 the above named officers, the Executive Secretary shall serve as temporary Chief  
309 Chaplain along with their Executive Secretary duties. If the Executive Secretary is  
310 unable to continue, the Executive Board shall appoint an Executive Secretary as  
311 provided in ARTICLE VI, Section III, and the above shall pertain. When an officer fills  
312 an unexpired term of another office, this shall not count against the requirement above  
313 relating to serving consecutive terms.”

314  
315 Section VI – Directors are to be elected for a three-year term with three elected each  
316 year. Should a vacancy occur due to death, resignation, or removal, of a Director, the  
317 unexpired vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Board at their next meeting.

318  
319 Section VII – The general election are to be held at the Annual Meeting. The newly  
320 elected officers will assume their duties immediately before the adjourning of the Annual  
321 Meeting.

322  
323 Section VIII – Any elected officer or director may be removed from office for any cause  
324 by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.

325

## 326 **ARTICLE VIII**

327

### 328 **MEETINGS**

329

330 Section I – There shall be an Annual Spring Meeting of this Association at a place and  
331 time designed by the Chief Chaplain.

332

333 Section II – The Chief Chaplain has the power to call a special meeting of all members,  
334 officers, and Executive Board as the need arises. The meeting must be announced at  
335 least two weeks prior to the meeting “in person”, via “USPS mail” (sent to the address of  
336 record) or by “electronic means” (send to the e-mail address of record). The purpose of  
337 the meeting shall be clearly stated in the announcement. If the meeting is to be  
338 conducted by USPS or electronically, only a motion with a “Yes”, “No” or “Abstain”  
339 option shall be provided.

- 340  
341 Section III – The recommended order of business at any Annual Meeting and Executive  
342 Board meeting shall be:
- 343 A. Opening Prayer
  - 344 B. Pledge of Allegiance
  - 345 C. Roll Call
  - 346 D. Minutes
  - 347 E. Reports:
    - 348 a. Chief Chaplain
    - 349 b. First Deputy Chief Chaplain
    - 350 c. Second Deputy Chief Chaplain
    - 351 d. Treasurer
      - 352 1. Financial Report
      - 353 2. Finance Committee Report
    - 354 e. Executive Secretary
      - 355 1. Membership
      - 356 2. Communications
      - 357 3. Good and Welfare
  - 358 F. Committee Reports
    - 359 a. Memorial
    - 360 b. Training
    - 361 c. Program
    - 362 d. Publicity
    - 363 e. Nominating
    - 364 f. Supplies
    - 365 g. Constitution and By-Law Committee
    - 366 h. Other Committees
  - 367 G. Old Business
  - 368 H. New Business
  - 369 I. Adjournment & Closing Prayer

370 **ARTICLE IX**

371  
372 **DUES**

373  
374 Section I – The annual dues of the Association shall be set by the Executive Board  
375 unless changed by majority vote of the members present at the Annual Meeting or a  
376 special meeting of the Association. Dues are payable at the Annual Meeting or may be  
377 sent to the Executive Secretary prior to the Annual Meeting.

378  
379 Section II – Annual dues paid by Fire Departments, Companies or Associations will be  
380 for the office of the Chaplain representing said group. If a Chaplain is changed in the  
381 course of the year, the new Chaplain’s membership is continued under the annual  
382 payment without additional dues. The resigned Chaplain may continue in the  
383 Association through personal payment of dues under ARTICLE III.

384  
385 Section III – Any member whose dues are one year in arrears shall receive a written  
386 communication from the Executive Secretary (sent to the address of record); stating the  
387 delinquency. If dues continue to be delinquent for a second year, the Chaplain’s name  
388 may be dropped from the official roster.

389  
390 **ARTICLE X**

391  
392 **AMENDMENTS**

393  
394 Section I – This Constitution and By-Laws shall be amended in the following manner:

- 395       A) Any proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive  
396       Secretary prior to the regularly scheduled Fall Executive Board meeting, who will  
397       refer it to the Constitution and By-Law Committee.
- 398       B) The Constitution and By-Law Committee will submit the proposed amendment to  
399       the Executive Board. If a majority of the Executive Board approves the proposed  
400       amendment it shall be forwarded to the membership of the Association for their  
401       consideration.
- 402       C) The text of the proposed amendment shall be included in the mailing sent with  
403       the proposed roster of officers (Article VII, Section II) prior to the Annual meeting  
404       wherein a vote on the amendment will be taken.

405 D) The amendment shall be adopted by a majority of those voting at the annual  
406 meeting. The proposed amendment shall become a part of the Constitution  
407 and By-Laws of this Association, as of the date of the approval, unless  
408 otherwise stated in the amendment.  
409

## 410 **ARTICLE XI**

### 411 412 **FUNDS**

413  
414 Section I – The Association shall maintain a Capital Asset Fund of ten thousand dollars  
415 (\$10,000.00) to be invested in savings accounts or certificates of deposit.  
416

417 Section II – All contributions to the Association shall be in the form of cash, marketable  
418 stocks or bonds, real or personal property.  
419

420 Section III – All loans established by the Association require Board of Directors’  
421 approval, with the resolution submitted and approval duly received at an authorized  
422 meeting of the general membership.  
423

## 424 **ARTICLE XII**

### 425 426 **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

427  
428 Section I – The Executive Board with vote, shall consist of:

- 429
- 430 1. Chief Chaplain, First Deputy Chief Chaplain, Second Deputy Chief  
431 Chaplain; Directors (9); immediate Past Chief Chaplain.
  - 432 2. Ex-Of (without vote); Executive Secretary; Treasurer; chairpersons of  
433 Committees; All Past Chief Chaplains; and other officers elected or  
434 appointed.

435  
436 Section II – The Executive Board shall handle the on-going business decisions of the  
437 Association, and shall direct the work of the Executive Secretary and the Treasurer.  
438 The Executive Secretary will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the  
439 Association.

440

441 Section III – The Executive Board shall meet at least three (3) times per year.

442

443 Section IV – The Executive Board may recommend to the Membership at the Annual  
444 Meeting those persons the deem deserving of Honorary Membership (See ARTICLE III,  
445 Section II).

446

447 **ARTICLE XIII** – In the event of dissolution, all assets of the Association will be  
448 donated to the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York, Inc. (FASNY).

449

450 *Constitution and By-Law revisions: 1985, 1995, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2014 and 2017.*